Proposal to start air service from Pithoragarh

156. SHRI RAMNATH KOVIND:
DR. RANBIR SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to start Air Service, specially 16 seater air craft from Pithoragarh in Kumaon region;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the said air service will link Nepal with Pithoragarh?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) At present because of operational/commercial considerations there is no proposal to start air services from Pithoragarh.

Loss to Air India

157. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI JALALUDDIN ANSARI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Air India incurred a provisional loss of Rs. 19.70 crores during April-December, 1994 against a profit of Rs. 200 crore in the previous year; and

(b) if so, the details and reasons for the poor preformance?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) During April-December, 1994 Air India earned an estimated profit of Rs. 6.88 crores as against a profit of Rs. 177.42 crores during coresponding period last year. The decline in profitability as compared to that of the previous year, is due to the—

(i) impact of the depreciation and interest of the B747-400 aircraft acquired during 1993-94;

(ii) decline in yields by around 10 per cent; and

(iii) impact of cancellations of several flights in the wake of plague outbreak during 1994.

Boost to conventional Tourist

158. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINDAN JAIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have made any attempts to give a boost to conventional tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the efforts being made by Government to construct convention halls in business and tourist centres?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM: (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) The Department of Tourism in its National Action Plan has given special emphasis and significance to Convention Tourism and has stated that it would endeavour to set up a Convention City with facilities of international standards. In order to promote India more effectively as a Convention Desination, the Department of Tourism sponsored setting up of India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), which has members comprising of Department of Tourism, National Airlines leading Hotel Chains, Tour Operators, Travel Agents and State Tourism Development Corporations. The India Convention Promotion Bureau complies information on the Association Convention market for sales and marketing activities. Further, it promotes and facilitates conferences to India by providing assistance and expertise in the preparation of bid documents, promotional material and through other outlets for promotion including Government of

India Tourist Offices overseas. Department of Tourism provides Mandatory Order passage to organisers to canvass abroad to win conventions for the country.

(c) India has already medium sized Convention Centres in major hotels and independent units all over the country. In Delhi, apart from major hotels, Vigyan Bhawan, India International Centres and Habitat Centre offer convention facilities. To enable the organisers to bid for large International Conferences apart from Delhi, convention facilities have come up in Jaipur (Rajasthan) and similar convention facilities are expected to come up in Agra (Uttar Pradesh), Bangalore (Karnataka) and Bombay (Maharashtra). With the setting up of new convention centre in the near future there is potential for dapid growth in this sector of the Tourism Industry.

International airport in private sector

159. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the first international airport in private sector is being constructed in the country;

(b) if so, the State in which the airport is being constructed;

(c) the estimated expenditure involved therein; and

(d) the time by which the construction work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (d). The Government of India has given its no objection for construction of airports of international standards in Bangalore in Karnatka and Cochin in Kerala to the respective State Governments. The respective State Governments are to firm up the cost of the project and other modalities. National Airports Authority and Inernational Airports Authority will provide technical assistance However, they will not share any cost of the projects. It is not possible ot give, at this stage, the likely time of completion of the project.

Air India's capital restructuring programme

160. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India is to undertake a major capital restructuring programme; and

(b) if so, what are the details and rationale thereof and by when it is likely to be finalised and implemented?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) With the enactment of Air Corporations (Transfer of Undertaking and Repeal) Act, 1994, the undertaking of Air India has been transferred to and vested in Air India Limited, a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956, with effect from 1-3-94. The equity and loan capital held by the Government in Air India has been taken as equity capital of Air India Limited with effect from 1-3-1994. With its restructuring, the company can mobilise resources from the capital market to meet its growth requirements. No time frame can be indicated for such mobilisation, at this stage.

Report of Committee appointed by Air India Management

161. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the report submitted by the Committee appointed by the Air India Management to look into the scarcity of spares and other rotable aircraft maintenance items: